

IN THE R. I. L. U.

Plenary Session of the Executive Bureau of the R. I. L. U.

Moscow, 20th December 1929.

** In yesterday's session of the Executive Bureau of the Red International of Labour Unions the discussion upon the speeches of comrades Merker and Losovsky was continued.

Comrade Heller dealt with the situation of the revolutionary trade union movement in the colonial countries and in particular with the strikes of the textile workers in Bombay and of the jute workers in Calcutta in 1928/29.

Comrade Rubinstein (R. I. L. U.) analysed the growing crisis in the capitalist world. A depression commenced at the beginning of 1929 and with the American exchange crash capitalism entered into a period of acute crisis. The crisis meant the collapse of the reformist-opportunist conception of „organised capitalism“.

Comrade Vitkovski (R. I. L. U.) dealt with the question of the carrying out of the decisions of the fourth congress of the R. I. L. U. Many countries were doing their best to carry out these decisions, but there were others, such as Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, Holland and Spain, where practically nothing had been done.

Comrades Herclot (France), Dembiczy (Poland), Bela Szanto (R. I. L. U.), Vassiliev, Sergitch (Yugoslavia), Apletin, Smolianski (Soviet Union), Bergner (Germany), and Chajes (Czechoslovakia) also spoke.

The session unanimously decided to send a telegram of greetings to the striking miners in New South Wales and a further telegram to the Meerut prisoners.

Moscow, 20th December 1929.

The discussion was continued in this morning's session. Comrades di Vittorio (Italy) and Stotz (Switzerland) spoke and comrade Tchernuchov welcomed the session in the name of the 2,500 workers of the Dynamo works and was answered by comrade Germanetto for the R. I. L. U.

Comrade Merker then made his closing speech. He dealt first of all with the prospects of the revolutionary trade union work and the development of the social fascist unions. The social fascist apparatus was merging more and more with the State apparatus and with the national fascist movement. To-day the central tasks of the revolutionary trade union movement were the independent leadership of the wage struggles of the workers and the carrying on of a merciless struggle against the social fascist bureaucracy. The conditions for political mass strikes would also have to be created. He warned his hearers against the illusion that the social fascist officials could be won or even neutralised. Whoever opposed or sabotaged the new policy of the R. I. L. U. would be removed from the leadership.

Comrade Losovsky then commenced his concluding speech: The American exchange crash was of great significance because it destroyed many of the illusions fostered by the social fascists. Recent events in Germany, Austria and other countries showed that the revolutionary development was quicker than many had thought. He then criticised the idea that there was any deep chasm between fascism and social fascism. The new fact in the situation was that the higher and middle officials and large sections of the lower officials of the reformist trade unions and a great section of the aristocracy of labour were already fascist. Referring to the question of the political mass strike the speaker declared that everything would depend on circumstances, but the possibility of defeat should not hold the revolutionary trade union movement back from the struggle.

Following upon comrade Losovsky's concluding speech the theses on the first point of the agenda were unanimously adopted.

Comrade Foster (U. S. A.) then reported upon the second point of the agenda, the activity of the revolutionary trade unions and the Trade Union Educational League in the U. S. A. He described the radicalisation of the American workers as

the result of the deterioration of their situation, the intense rationalisation and inhuman exploitation. American imperialism was feverishly preparing for war and the American Federation of Labour was completely fascist and served the employers as an organised strike-breaking weapon. The pseudo-oppositional movement led by Muste was in reality directed against the revolutionary unions. The Gastonia struggle was typical of the third period in America. The Negro problem was being seriously dealt with for the first time, witness the recent revolutionary trade union congress.

Moscow, 21th December 1929.

In to-day's session the discussion of comrade Foster's speech was opened.

Comrade Padmore (U. S. A.) dealt with the economic and social situation of the Negro workers. The revolutionary trade union congress in Cleveland was a great success. The struggle in Gastonia had been a splendid example of the solidarity of the white and coloured workers in their joint struggle against capitalism.

Comrade Stachovitz (International Propaganda and Action Comm. of the Chemical Workers) declared that the revolutionary international work amongst the chemical workers should be strengthened. He considered it extremely important that a revolutionary trade union for the chemical workers should be formed in the United States.

Comrades Wilson (Great Britain), Heller (R. I. L. U.), Tim Buck (Canada), Heimann (U. S. A.), Yu Fei (China), Ballam (U. S. A.), Heckert (Germany) also spoke.

Comrade Horner (Great Britain) declared that the work of the revolutionary unions in the U. S. A. was making progress as compared with the time of the fourth congress. The standards of life of the American workers were lower than in Great Britain. He proposed that an International Propaganda and Action Committee for the unemployed workers should be formed.

Comrades Merker (Germany), Giraldo (Colombia), Levin (R. I. L. U.), Sirocco (U. S. A.), also spoke.

Comrade Losovsky declared that the task of the revolutionary trade unions was to initiate mass struggles and to draw the masses in their ranks. The problem of the unorganised workers was very important, as also was the problem of unemployment. International experience should be better utilised, and more attention paid to the work amongst the Negroes and amongst the emigrant workers.

** In the morning session of the 22nd December comrade Foster made his closing speech. In the name of his organisation he condemned the action of the revolutionary clothing workers union in the U. S. which accepted the clause for compulsory arbitration, and accepted the challenge of comrade Horner to take part in a competition with the British minority movement. He expressed agreement with comrade Merker concerning the importance of the unemployment problem in the U. S. and the importance of shop councils in the Steel, automobile and chemical industries in the U. S. where the workers are unorganised. In these industries the initial organisational form would represent the basis for a trade union.

At the motion of the French delegation a manifesto to the revolutionary unions in China was adopted.

Comrade Giton (France) then dealt with the situation and the task of the C. G. T. U. He analysed the development of the reformist unions to fascism and pointed out that the situation of the working class was steadily deteriorating, as a consequence of which the general strike movement was growing and increasing in intensity. He dealt with a number of these strikes and criticised the weaknesses and errors of the revolutionary trade union movement. In particular a struggle was necessary against the anarcho-syndicalist traditions.

Comrade Vitkovski declared that the last congress of the C. G. T. U. had been a turning point in the history of the organisation. The clearing up of the problem of the relations of the C. G. T. U. with the Communist Party had been carried out at the congress and the opportunist and anarcho-syndicalist elements had been defeated. He also criticised the weaknesses of the movement, in particular the lack of mass preparation for the

congress. The danger of a split on the part of the opportunists could only be countered by increased work amongst the masses.

The French question was discussed in the morning session of the 23rd December. Comrade **Szerban** criticised the weaknesses and errors of the C. G. T. U. and declared that its manifesto of the 18th November, which contained only economic demands, was a concession to the opportunists.

Comrade **Voitkevitch** (R. I. L. U.) declared that the membership decline of the C. G. T. U. had been caused by the fact that the organisation had concentrated chiefly upon agitational and propaganda work and had paid insufficient attention to the organisational side of the struggle. Thousands of striking workers had not been organised and brought into the ranks of the C. G. T. U. The unorganised workers should be won by the formation of shop councils.

Comrade **Germanetto** (Italy) declared that although the C. G. T. U. should prepare for illegality it should nevertheless do everything in its power to maintain its legality.

Comrade **Losovsky** declared that the most important task of the C. G. T. U. was to repulse the attempts of the bourgeoisie, the fascists and social fascists to force the C. G. T. U. into illegality. The organisation would have to be far more energetic in its efforts to rid itself of opportunist and reformist elements.

Comrades **Teneve** (France), **Dubois** (France), **Vassiliev** (Soviet Union), **Billoux** (France) also spoke.

After the closing speeches of comrades Giton and Vitkovski Comrade **Zapotocky** (Czechoslovakia) then delivered the report on the situation of the revolutionary trade unions in Czechoslovakia. He declared that the attempts of the capitalists to carry out the rationalisation at the cost of the workers resulted in an intensification of the class struggle, and this intensified situation was the basis for the disruption of the opportunists. The break with Hais and his followers had been historically necessary. The revolutionary unions had now 65 000 members as compared with 105 000 prior to the split. Hais only had 15 000 supporters. Progress had been made recently with the application of the new R. I. L. U. tactic as could be seen in the strike of the landworkers.

Comrade **Gey** (Soviet Union) declared that the intensification of the class struggle and the break with the reformist opportunists had cleared the way for a real revolutionary tactic.

In this morning's session the discussion on the Czechish question took place. Comrade **Sussmanovitch** (R. I. L. U.) pointed out that the decisions of the R. I. L. U. had not been sufficiently carried out in Czechoslovakia and the main activity of the revolutionary unions had not yet been concentrated on the factories. The formation of shop stewards organisations and of self-defence organisations was urgently necessary.

Comrade **Jussefovitch** declared that the new leadership of the revolutionary unions was making good progress. There were difficulties, but comrade Zapotocky had exaggerated them. The shop councils should be revolutionised against both the right-wing opportunists and the left-wing deviation.

Comrade **Heckert** (Germany) declared that Czechoslovakia was a perfect example of the children's sickness of communism: no factory work, no work in the reformist organisations, no real fighting leadership, whilst the struggle concerning the statutes and the property of the unions overshadowed the real tasks of the unions.

Comrade **Schwermer** (Czechoslovakia) declared that there was an acute danger of a fascist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia and the social fascists were already in the camp of fascism. The greatest error of the Czechoslovakian revolutionary unions was that they did not fight ideologically against the opportunists.

Comrades **Preiss** (Germany), **Rabate** (France), **Bayer** (Czechoslovakia), **Henrikovski** (Poland), **Perevosnikov** (RILU.), **Resek** (Czechoslovakia) and **Pavlov** (Youth) also spoke.

In their closing speeches comrades **Gey** and **Zapotocky** both declared that the right-wing danger was the main danger and that by the fifth congress all the errors of the movement in Czechoslovakia should be corrected.

Comrade **Jussefovitch** (RILU.) then delivered his report concerning the preparations for the fifth congress of the RILU. which he declared represented a political and not an organisational problem. It was necessary to popularise the decisions of the RILU., to extend the activity of the shop councils, to mobilise the worker correspondents etc. All the new unions would have to be represented at the congress and invitations would be sent to the Pacific T. U. secretariat and to the Latin-American secretariat. Special conferences of the Latin-American, Arabian, and Negro workers would be organised.

Comrades **Zarengo** (Poland), **Horner** (Great Britain), **Herclot** (France), **Santini** (Italy), **Merker** (Germany) and a Chinese comrade took part in the discussion which followed Jussefovitch's report.

All the resolutions were then unanimously adopted and the closing speech of the plenary session was made by comrade **Losovsky**.

WORKERS' SPORT MOVEMENT

The Split in the Workers' Sport Movement in Finland.

By Karo Teräs.

** Since the social Fascists, by means of a despicable falsification of the credentials of over 50 delegates, succeeded in seizing the leadership at the last congress, complete anarchy has taken possession of the Finnish workers sport movement.

The leadership of the association has abandoned the old line of class struggle; it favours the Olympic Games staged by the bourgeois sport movement, and protects the strike-breakers against the overwhelming majority of the members, who insist energetically upon the expulsion of the class traitors from their organisation. The leadership of the association hunts down relentlessly all members and local groups who refuse to tolerate strike-breakers in their midst, or to take part in the bourgeois games.

The leaders of the association joined the social fascist press in publicly advocating participation in the bourgeois Olympiade, but did not mention a word about the magnificent Spartakiade of the international proletariat in Moscow. This conduct caused a large section of the members to protest energetically against the attitude of the leaders, and to demand that the organisation should return to the old line of genuine class warfare. To this the leaders replied by an open split, and expelled both individual members and whole local groups from the association. Of the 32,000 members of the association over 13,000 have been expelled, a circumstance proving clearly on which side the great majority of the members may be found. All the largest and most important local groups have been expelled.

In order to clear up the situation, a unity conference was held at Helsingfors at the beginning of December, which proved a mighty protest demonstration against the social fascist splitters. Over 20,000 worker athletes in every part of the country were represented at this conference, or considerably more than one half of the association.

The Conference resolved that the struggle for the unity of the association, and against the reformist leaders, should be continued with the utmost energy. It is now the task of the opposition to make clear to the members who are still undecided and irresolute, the harmful nature of the social Fascist policy, and to show at the same time the traitorous rôle played by the Lucerne Sport International.

A unity committee embracing the whole country was elected, and commissioned to organise and lead the unity campaign, and to arrange games with the workers sport associations abroad based on the platform of class warfare. The position of the unity movement of the worker athletes in Finland is thus exceedingly favourable, and the immediate future will indubitably bring fresh victories for the unity movement and considerable defeats for the social Fascist pests.